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Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B

Strengthening further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements, to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter of the United Nations as contained in the Millennium Declaration

Progress in implementing the Council's agreed conclusions 2002/1 and related provisions of General Assembly resolution 50/227

Report of the Secretary-General

Executive summary

The present report highlights progress in implementing key provisions of Council agreed conclusions 2002/1, "Strengthening further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements, to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter of the United Nations as contained in the Millennium Declaration". It also responds to the mandate for annual reporting on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields contained in General Assembly resolution 45/264, by addressing aspects related to the implementation of resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B and to follow-up to the resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations, notably resolutions 1998/46 and 1999/51. At the end of the report, recommendations are made for further consideration of the Council.

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I. Background

1. At its coordination segment of 2002, the Economic and Social Council considered the theme, "Strengthening further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements, to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter of the United Nations as contained in the Millennium Declaration".

2. As a result of its deliberations, the Council adopted agreed conclusions 2002/1,[1] which contain concrete steps for improving the Council's working methods. In paragraph 3 of the agreed conclusions, the Council recognized that, in order to meet the challenges and opportunities of globalization and sustainable development and to promote the effective implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2) and the outcomes of all other major United Nations conferences and summits, it will need to build on its achievements thus far to further strengthen its role and impact.

3. While many of the actions requested should be seen as of an ongoing and long-term nature, the present report highlights progress in implementing key provisions of the agreed conclusions 2002/1 requiring follow-up by the Council and the United Nations, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 45/264 and 50/227. The present report also responds to the mandate for annual reporting on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields contained in General Assembly resolution 45/264. It notably addresses aspects related to the implementation of resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B and to follow-up to resolutions of the Economic and Social Council on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations, notably resolutions 1999/51 and 1998/46.

4. Section II focuses on follow-up activities within the purview of the General Assembly and section III on those within the purview of the Council. The present report is set out in two columns: the left-hand column contains selected provisions of agreed conclusions 2002/1, Council resolutions 1998/46, 1999/51 as well as General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 that call for action; the right-hand column presents the status of follow-up corresponding to each action-oriented paragraph.

5. The present report should be read in conjunction with the report for the coordination segment on the role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits (E/2003/67). In order to avoid overlap between the two reports, the present report focuses on issues related to the working methods of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that are not addressed in the coordination segment, and not in the work of the open-ended ad hoc working group of the General Assembly on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields.

II. Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B: activities within the purview of the General Assembly

Relevant provisions	*Implementation suggestions*
General Assembly resolution 50/227	
Annex I, sect. I	
Funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.	The issue is discussed by the Council in its operational activities segment and by the General Assembly during its consideration of operational activities for development, in particular, in the context of the triennial policy review.
Annex I, sect. II	
The use of innovative mechanisms, such as panel discussions with delegations and interactive debates, with the active participation of Secretariat and agency representatives, as well as outside experts should be encouraged (para. 19).	At the fifty-seventh session, for the first time a joint panel discussion was organized between the Second and Third Committees on globalization. Also for the first time, the World Bank President and a Nobel Laureate delivered keynote addresses to the Second Committee, which enriched the debates. Another panel was organized on conference follow-up.
There is a need to promote greater coherence and complementarity between the work of the Second and Third Committees (para. 21).	The relationship between the Second and Third Committees has been extensively discussed by the open-ended ad hoc working group of the General Assembly on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields (hereafter referred as the ad hoc working group of the General Assembly). The Second and Third Committees bureaux met twice during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.
There is a need to consider possible measures to allow for the coordinated consideration of the report of the Economic and Social Council during the sessions of the General Assembly (para. 22).	The report of the Council is currently discussed in plenary meetings of the General Assembly, where the President introduces it, and in the Committees. The debates in plenary meeting and in the Second Committee have been somewhat limited. Improving the report of the Council and its consideration by the General Assembly is discussed in the ad hoc working group of the General Assembly.

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
Resolutions should be shorter, in particular as regards their preambular section. The bureaux, in reviewing the respective agendas, could identify and recommend those individual items or clusters of items that could be effectively considered in omnibus resolutions (para. 24).	At the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Second Committee adopted 43 resolutions and the Third Committee 72 resolutions. The number of resolutions in both Committees has increased each year since 2000. During the fifty-seventh session, the Second Committee used common paragraphs in different resolutions to address issues such as debt or the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The length of resolutions varies, depending on the nature of the resolution. **[Recommendation 1]**
To facilitate discussions based on an integrated approach to development issues, the possibility of choosing a principal theme or themes should be explored to focus the substantive debate under each cluster in the agenda (para. 27).	The ad hoc working group of the General Assembly will discuss the work of the General Assembly plenary meetings and the Second and Third Committees relevant to conference outcome implementation and follow-up. There has been no successful experience thus far to focus substantive debate under specific items in the Second Committee on a principal theme.

III. Review of the implementation of agreed conclusions 2002/1 of the Economic and Social Council, General Assembly resolution 50/227 and related resolutions of the Council: follow-up activities within the purview of the Economic and Social Council

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
Council as a main United Nations organ (Agreed conclusions 2002/1)	
The Council stresses the importance of a more effective use of the existing structure, i.e., the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary machinery, for a coordinated and integrated follow-up to and implementation of the commitments agreed at the Millennium Summit and other major United Nations conferences and summits, so as to avoid overlap and redundancy and enhance effectiveness of actions at all levels (para. 5).	The issue is discussed by the Council in its coordination segment and by the ad hoc working group of the General Assembly.
The Council looks forward to regular consultations and coordination among the principal organs of the United Nations in pursuit of their functions (para. 11).	The cooperation and coordination among the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council were enhanced considerably during the past year. Notably, the area of peace-building and conflict prevention was marked by increased interaction between the Economic and Social Council and the

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
	Security Council. In 2002, for example, the President of the Economic and Social Council addressed the Security Council on four occasions. The President of the Security Council spoke at the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council and also addressed the Council on the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the General Peace Agreement in Mozambique. In 2003, the President of the Economic and Social Council made a statement in the Security Council on the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations. The Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau worked closely with the Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. This contributed to enhancing the Organization's capacity to address simultaneously social, economic and security issues and to deal comprehensively and coherently with a country emerging from conflict. Regarding the relationship with the Assembly, the summary of the special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (hereafter referred as the Economic and Social Council annual spring meeting) will serve as an input to the General Assembly high-level dialogue on financing for development. The ad hoc working group of the General Assembly will provide further suggestions on the relationship between the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. **[Recommendation 2]**
Council's themes (Agreed conclusions 2002/1) The Council shall continue to carry out, each year, at its coordination segment, a review of cross-cutting themes common to major international conferences and summits. The theme could be related to the theme of the high-level segment, respecting decisions already made by the Council, thus enabling the Council to address both the policy and system-wide coordination aspects of the theme (para. 6).	At the coordination segment of this year's session, the Council will take up the theme, "The role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits". The theme of the high-level segment, "Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development", will be the focus of one of the panel discussions during the coordination segment to build a link between the two segments. The Council may wish to bear in mind paragraph 6 of agreed conclusions 2002/1 as it selects its theme for 2004 (see E/2003/65). The

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
	Bureau reminded the Council of the possibility of addressing related themes at its high-level and coordination segments in its suggestions for further improvements to Council meetings and preparations. As a result of the work of the ad hoc working group of the General Assembly, the links between the two segments are expected to become clearer in subsequent years.
In making decisions for the related themes for the coordination segment of the following year, the Council should seek to identify themes, including on new and evolving issues, which will add value to international efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of all other major United Nations conferences and summits (see para. 6).	Likewise, the Council may wish to bear these aspects in mind as it decides on the themes for its substantive session in 2004 (see E/2003/65, on themes for 2004).
Relationship with financial and trade institutions and conference follow-up (Agreed conclusions 2002/1)	
The Council reaffirms the need for "staying engaged", as stated in paragraph 69 (b) of the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,[2] encourages the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization to address issues of coherence, coordination and cooperation, as a follow-up to the Conference, at the spring meeting between the Council and the Bretton Woods institutions. The meeting should include an intergovernmental segment to address an agenda agreed to by the participating organizations, as well as a dialogue with civil society and the private sector (para.7).	The Council's annual dialogue with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization on 14 April provided an important tool for "staying engaged" in the follow-up to the Monterrey Conference. The theme of the meeting was "Increased coherence, coordination and cooperation for the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus at all levels, one year after the Conference". Major stakeholders gathered in this first fully reconstituted meeting after Monterrey to take stock of gaps and advances and implementation, and maintain the political momentum for implementing the agreements reached at the Conference. Preparations involved extensive consultations within the Council and with the Management of the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO, as well as a meeting with the Executive Directors of the World Bank. Informal hearings and dialogue with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and representatives of the business sector were also held. A new feature in this year's meeting was the participation of a representative of the WTO intergovernmental machinery, the Chairperson of the Trade Policy Review Body of the WTO, as well as of the President of the General Assembly and of a significant number of Executive Directors of the World Bank and of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In addition,

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
	the Chairs of the Development Committee and of the Intergovernmental Group of 24 on International Monetary and Development Affairs (G-24), as well as management of the United Nations, IMF, the World Bank, WTO, the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies, took part in the event. Representatives of NGOs and the private sector participated in greater number than in the past (see summary of the meeting, A/58/77-E/2003/62). In order to continue attracting high-level participants in the dialogue and to further strengthen the contributions of these meetings to enhanced policy coherence, their agenda and format need to be more focused, with even more extensive preparations. **[Recommendation 3]**
The Council looks forward to the outcome of the forthcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, and will examine the implications of its outcome in its future discussions on the integrated and coordinated follow-up to and implementation of major United Nations conferences and summits (para. 8).	The outcome of the Summit is discussed in the report for the coordination segment (E/2003/67).
The Council will work with the organizations of the United Nations system, including financial and trade institutions, to increase collaboration for implementing the goals of major United Nations conferences and summits, using fully its high-level, operational, coordination, humanitarian affairs and general segments (para. 9).	The organizations in the United Nations system have been extensively involved in the preparation for the high-level segment of the 2003 session of the Economic and Social Council. They contributed to preparing the report of the Secretary-General and organizing round tables on 24 March and 30 April and during the segment. Inter-agency consultations have also been intensive for the preparation of reports for the operational activities segment. There is still room for further strengthening of the engagement of agencies for the coordination segment in future years.
The Council recalls the resolve expressed in the Millennium Declaration, inter alia, to give greater opportunities to the private sector, NGOs and civil society in general so as to contribute to the realization of United Nations goals and programmes, and in that regard welcomes their increased contribution in recent years to its activities and encourages them to continue contributing to the realization of United Nations goals and programmes, in accordance with the rules of	Civil society extensively participated in the preparations for the high-level segment of the Council, notably through the NGO forums held in 2002 and 2003. Strong involvement of the private sector, NGOs and civil society also continued in follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus. Informal dialogues of civil society and the private sector with the Council were held on 20 and 21 March in preparation for the 2003 annual spring meeting of the Council. During the dialogues with NGOs, external debt, international trade, reform of global

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
procedure and relevant Council resolutions, as well as General Assembly resolution 50/227 (para. 15).	governance, MDGs and official development assistance and policy coherence were discussed. The dialogue with the private sector identified critical issues to move forward implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. Representatives of NGOs and the private sector participated in the plenary meetings and round tables in this year's annual spring Council meeting in greater numbers than in the past. In the light of the role of NGOs and the private sector in the integrated and coordinated follow-up to the United Nations conferences, the Council's continuing dialogue with them would be important for bringing synergy in achieving the internationally agreed development goals. **[Recommendation 4]**
Modalities of the Council's work	
The Council recalls General Assembly resolutions 45/264, 48/162, 50/227 and 52/12 B, which provided for, inter alia, better division of labour between its segments, shorter and more focused sessions, and clearer and action-oriented guidelines for the United Nations system and funds and programmes (agreed conclusions, para. 14).	The Council may wish to ensure that outcomes of its 2003 session provide clear and action-oriented guidelines easily applicable by the United Nations system.
The Council shall hold a shorter, focused substantive session for four weeks in July (General Assembly resolution 50/227, para. 40).	Further efforts need to be made to focus sessions, particularly by ensuring greater thematic unity among the Council's segments. The Council's 2002 substantive session was held for four weeks in July, which has become an established practice.
The Council recognizes that negotiated outcomes in the form of agreed conclusions or resolutions are normally the preferred outcomes for the coordination, humanitarian affairs and operational activities segments. The Council will consider ways and means to enhance the effectiveness of its agreed outcomes as provided for in General Assembly resolution 50/227. When negotiated outcomes are not sought, the Council will consider inviting its Bureau to prepare a factual summary on the basis of consultations with Council members (agreed conclusions, para. 16).	Agreed conclusions have been adopted as an outcome of the coordination segment since 1995. At the operational and humanitarian segments, the Council adopted resolutions in 2002. The Council may consider whether a resolution may be a more effective outcome of its coordination segment on certain themes in future years.
The outcome of each segment of the Council should be strengthened and made more action-oriented. Resolutions, decisions and agreed conclusions should be implemented	As part of the ongoing shift of focus in the Council system towards implementation, action-oriented outcomes are expected from substantive sessions. The Council's outcomes from 2002 were

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
and followed up by all relevant parts of the United Nations system. This process should be monitored by the Council and the General Assembly on a regular basis, as appropriate (General Assembly resolution 50/227, para. 44).	disseminated to the relevant offices of the United Nations system, requesting follow-up. The Council could review more systematically implementation of the outcomes of its high-level, operational activities and humanitarian segments. The report for the coordination segment contains proposals for engaging United Nations system agencies more closely in the follow-up to Council outcomes.
Timely submission of reports to the Council will allow negotiated outcomes to be negotiated and finalized by the end of June and in any case no later than the last day of each respective segment (agreed conclusions, para. 16) *Related actions requested by the General Assembly in resolution 50/227* The Bureau shall monitor the state of preparedness of documentation for the Council and take necessary measures to facilitate its timely issuance in all official languages (para. 50).	Out of 74 registered pre-session documents for the Council's session in 2002 which were edited and translated in New York, 19 documents were submitted before the 22 April deadline. The delay in the submission of reports was mainly due to the need to incorporate outcomes of meetings that took place after the report submission deadline, and/or refinements for the extensive consultations with various offices of the United Nations and other organizations in preparation for the reports. Taking account of these circumstances, a flexible time-line was adopted for reports for the 2003 session that would not be able to meet standard deadlines due to the above-mentioned reasons. **[Recommendation 5]**
The Council further recognizes the need for more effective meetings during and in preparation for its substantive sessions. It invites the Bureau to submit practical proposals to that effect to the Council before the end of 2002 (agreed conclusions, para. 16).	In response to this mandate, the Bureau prepared a note containing suggestions for further improvements in the Council's meetings and preparations (non-paper from the President of the Council circulated to delegations on 5 March 2003). The practical suggestions related to issues ranging from arrangements for the preparation of the work of the Council (e.g., the coherence, streamlining, timeliness and focus of reports, the early preparation of outcomes; inputs by the functional commissions) and the streamlining of the Council's agenda to the engagement of the United Nations system in its work, the nature, "actionability" and dissemination of the Council's outcomes, and better coordination of the work of functional commissions. **[Recommendation 6]**
Every year, the Council will hold a two-day interactive meeting, including at a high level, when agreed, on operational activities, as an integral part of the operational activities segment of the substantive session. The interactive meeting will provide an opportunity for policy makers to address issues related to development cooperation. The Council should also hold an interactive	The Council's interactive dialogue with the heads of funds and programmes on thematic and coordination issues in 2002 did not benefit from the presence of all executive heads (three executive heads did not participate). The operational activities segment of the Council's session in 2003 includes a high-level dialogue. To promote active high-level participation, a panel is organized on resources for operational activities

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
dialogue with the heads of funds and programmes on thematic and coordination issues related to operational activities on options and measures aimed at promoting coordination and improving the performance of funds and programmes in the implementation of the outcomes of relevant major United Nations conferences and summits (agreed conclusions, para. 18).	for development, reviewing the progress made on the issue of funding on development cooperation activities of the United Nations. Panel discussions are also being organized on the assessment of field-level activities and on the promotion of the integrated approach to rural development for poverty eradication and sustainable development.
Related actions requested by the General Assembly in resolution 50/227	
Contributions to the preparations for the triennial policy review of operational activities conducted by the General Assembly should be continued (resolution 50/227, para. 65).	The operational activities segment of the Council's session in 2003 will also include consideration of the review of progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/201, on the triennial policy review, in a traditional interactive informal format. A high-level panel could be organized on the theme of least developed countries in 2004, should the Council decide on it as a focus of the high-level segment in 2004.
The role of the Council in providing overall coordination and guidance for operational development programmes and funds on a system-wide basis should be reinforced, including objectives, priorities and strategies in the implementation of the policies formulated by the General Assembly, as well as concentrating on cross-cutting and coordination issues related to operational activities, including through a high-level meeting, in order to provide an opportunity for policy makers to engage in discussion on the broader issues for development cooperation (para. 60).	A main focus of the Council's operational activities segment in 2002 was on capacity-building by the United Nations development system. The Council extensively discussed the evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the United Nations system development work. The Council also considered and proposed that a programme for harmonizing and simplifying procedures of funds and programmes, requested by the General Assembly, be implemented by 2004. Ministers and high-level officials from countries participated in the segment, as did the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC) and bilateral development cooperation organizations. **[Recommendation 7]**
The Council agrees that the items considered in its general segment should be streamlined, in particular by transmitting to the General Assembly items more appropriately considered by the Assembly and avoiding addressing the same issues in more than one segment, unless that is specifically decided (agreed conclusions, para. 20).	At the 2003 substantive session of the Council, in an effort to avoid overlap of issues between the coordination and general segments and to further streamline the agenda, the issue of integrated conference follow-up is to be discussed in the coordination segment only, while the general segment will focus on the follow-up to individual conferences (under item 6, "Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits"). The Council could

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
	consider ways to further improve its agenda. Relevant proposals are also contained in the report for the coordination segment.
The Council will continue to consider ways to strengthen further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements, to help fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter. At the coordination segment of its substantive session of 2003, the Council will benefit from the General Assembly's discussion on strengthening the organization (agreed conclusions, para. 22).	At its fifty-seventh session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 57/300, entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change". In the resolution, the Assembly, among other things, reiterated the necessity to pursue the process of revitalization of the General Assembly, reform of the Security Council, restructuring of the Economic and Social Council and modernization of the Secretariat.
The Council may convene special sessions to address urgent developments in the economic, social and related fields that may require guidance and coordination by the Council (resolution 50/227, para. 41).	The Council could review approaches to the implementation of this measure, in connection with its consideration of the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. It may consider applying this measure, in particular, in response to developments in the economic and social area impacting on progress towards the internationally agreed development goals requiring its urgent consideration.
Functional commissions coordination (Agreed conclusions 2002/1)	
In the follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, the Council shall continue to ensure the harmonization, coordination and coherence of the agendas and work programmes of the functional commissions by promoting a clearer division of labour among them and providing clear policy guidance to them. Such guidance will enable the Council and its subsidiary machinery to serve as a coherent system to review progress (para. 13).	The Council should provide guidance on the work programme of the functional commissions at its general segment based on the consolidated report on the work of functional commissions. The ad hoc working group of the General Assembly is expected to make recommendations on the Council's role in this regard. These recommendations will be further discussed at the Council's coordination segment. One idea is that the Council should serve as a platform for a clearer tie between the conference reviews by the functional commissions and the executive boards, with a view to assisting in orienting the operational work of the system towards conference implementation.
The functional commissions should further enhance their role as the main forums for expert follow-up and review of United Nations conferences and summits. The Council invites its functional commissions to provide inputs to the overall theme of the Council's coordination and high-level	As a result of recent conference outcomes, some functional commissions are increasingly seen as key actors for the technical review and follow-up to the United Nations conferences and summits. For example, as mandated by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the future work programme of the Commission for Sustainable

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
segments as they relate to their area of work (para. 13).	Development will be organized as a series of two-year cycles, one year focusing on implementation and the following one on policy discussions. A few commissions have provided inputs for the Council's high-level segment. However, an early decision on Council themes is essential to enable the commissions to contribute effectively. As suggested by the Bureau, joint bureau meetings can discuss the contribution of the functional commissions to these themes. The role of functional commissions in this regard is addressed in the consolidated report of the functional commissions (to be issued) and in the report for the coordination segment (E/2003/67).
The outcomes of the functional commissions should be considered in the general segment on the basis of their reports and the consolidated report on their work, which should identify cross-cutting policy issues, gaps/overlaps, areas of complementarity and cooperation, focus on substantive issues and highlight coordination issues requiring the Council's attention within its coordination segment (para. 19).	The consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions has not received systematic attention at Council sessions. To better support the work of the Council and to facilitate further strengthening of the links between functional commissions and the work of the Council, the consolidated report for 2003 focuses on cross-cutting policy issues in relation to the themes for the 2003 high-level, coordination and other segments. **[Recommendation 8]**
The Council calls for further efforts by its members, its subsidiary machinery and the Secretariat to ensure greater overall coherence among the reports requested and those presented to the Council, and to streamline its documentation. The Secretariat is invited to submit consolidated reports in response to related mandates. The reports of the functional commissions should focus on substantive issues and highlight coordination, coherence and harmonization issues requiring the Council's attention. The Bureau and the Secretariat should ensure the dissemination of the outcomes of the Council to a broader audience (para. 21).	To avoid overlaps and increase efficiency, reporting on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields has been merged in the present report with reporting on the follow-up to the agreed conclusions of the previous year. The report for the 2003 coordination segment has been merged with the annual report on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit. While there is little overlap among the reports submitted at the high-level, coordination, operational activities and humanitarian segments, a fairly large number of reports are before the Council at its general segment. **[Recommendation 9]** Many reports of functional commissions stress the importance of coordination, coherence and harmonization, in particular in relation to issues of a cross-cutting nature or requiring partnership.

Relevant provisions	*Implementation suggestions*
	The panel discussions with the chairpersons of the functional commissions held at the general segment continue to focus on their work as it relates to the theme of the high-level and coordination segments. This should complement and serve to further stimulate a discussion of the consolidated report, as this report, as noted, highlights the linkages and complementarities in the work of the functional commissions.
	The Council's outreach programme has been considerably improved through its web site. In addition, the Council has published the first newsletter on its work, and it will be prepared and distributed regularly; it is also available on the web site.
Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/51 and 1998/46 on functional commissions	
The meetings of the Council's subsidiary bodies should be scheduled at least eight weeks before the session of the Council, where feasible, and submission of the reports of these bodies should be well in advance for the consideration of the Council (Council resolution 1999/51, para. 2).	In 2003, meetings of the functional commissions were held between 10 February and 6 June. Three functional commissions did not comply with the eight-week rule. **[Recommendation 10]**
	Committees that organize more than one meeting per year continue to face constraints in the timely submission of their reports. In this regard, the current mechanism for reporting may need to be reviewed to better report to the Council on the work of these committees.
Interaction between the Council and its subsidiary bodies should be increased, including through joint bureau meetings and strengthened coordination functions. Efforts should be made to further ensure the regular exchange of information on their programmes of work, including a more systematic transmission of documentation to other subsidiary bodies (Council resolution 1999/51, para. 3).	The interaction intensified in 2002 when a meeting of the Bureau of the Council with all the chairpersons of the functional commissions was organized, followed by a panel discussion with members of the Council. The meeting provided a useful forum for coordination and cooperation among the functional commissions as well as with the Council and contributed to strengthening the relationship between the Council and its commissions. During the general segment of the 2003 session, a new modality will be introduced to strengthen the involvement of the functional commissions by holding round-table panel discussions with Chairs of the functional commissions and the Economic and Social Council.
Annual meetings of the Bureau of the Council with the chairpersons of the functional commissions are encouraged in order to facilitate an exchange of views and information on the direction of their programmes of work (Council resolution 1999/51, para. 4).	

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
The bureaux of the functional commissions should: (a) Develop interaction to improve collaboration and coordination on issues that are addressed by two or more commissions, using information technology as required (Council resolution 1999/51, para. 5); (b) Continue to support the cooperation among the functional commissions, in particular by implementing fully the guidance given by the Council in its resolution 1999/1 and to encourage further strengthening and intensification of collaboration among and between the secretariats of the functional commissions (Council resolution 1999/51, para. 22).	In view of their critical roles in addressing core issues of major United Nations conferences and summits, horizontal coordination among functional commissions would be crucial, especially in relation to cross-cutting issues. In this regard, more bilateral joint bureau meetings between functional commissions could be organized to promote substantive horizontal interaction.
Functional commissions are invited to implement, the relevant provisions of resolution 1998/46, in particular as it relates to the adoption of multi-year programmes of work and to the coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits (Council resolution 1999/51, para. 6).	The consolidated report of functional commissions contains information on the status of the work programmes of functional commissions. Six out of the nine functional commissions have a multi-year work programme.
Functional commissions should improve their working methods, including as they relate to in-depth discussions, panels of experts and the exchange of national experiences, and their intersessional meetings (Council resolution 1998/46, annex II, paras. 2-13).	The working methods of the functional commissions are examined in the consolidated report on the outcome of the functional commissions.
The participation of officials from capitals responsible for the specific follow-up to United Nations conferences, as well as experts, should be encouraged. High-level participation is desirable and will be facilitated by enhancing the quality of deliberations in the functional commissions (Council resolution 1998/46, annex II, para. 18).	While some commissions benefit from a large number of participants from capitals, others such as the Commission for Social Development, are attended largely or in part by missions in New York. This year for the first time, the Commission on Human Rights organized a high-level segment, which was attended by 82 high-level officials.
The Committee for Development Policy should improve its methods of work in order to better contribute to the work of the Council; the future programme of work of the Committee should be determined at the substantive session of the Council (Council resolution 1999/51, para. 13).	At its fourth session, the Committee reaffirmed its willingness to continue to contribute to the Council's work. The recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on the methodology for the identification of the least developed countries, for example, allowed the Committee to focus on and respond effectively to the relevant requests of the

Relevant provisions	*Implementation suggestions*
	Council in resolution 2001/43. The timing of the Council's decision on the theme of its high-level segment is critical, to enable the Committee for Development Policy to contribute effectively to the preparations for the segment. In view of the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Committee feels that it could make a particular contribution in the area of global public goods and innovative financial mechanisms in the pursuit of sustainable development. To facilitate further the work of the Committee, a homepage for intersessional discussion was established.
Inter-agency coordination (Agreed conclusions 2002/1)	
The Council underscores that the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits should be fully taken into account, as relevant, for the operational work and country frameworks of United Nations system organizations, in accordance with national development objectives and priorities. The boards of the funds and programmes should ensure that the policy guidance from the General Assembly and the Council, inter alia, on the follow-up to conferences, is translated, as appropriate, into operational guidelines and programmes, which should be kept under review by the Council (para.10).	With the high-level and coordination segments addressing the same cross-sectoral conference theme (see agreed conclusions 2002/1, para. 6), the contribution of the operational activities segment could, for example, take the form of specific panels or dialogues, addressing the development role of the United Nations system through its operational arm in relation to the same or a related theme. The Council and the funds and programmes should continue to focus on that same theme and the implications of the Council's discussion after the session.
The Council reiterates its belief that economic growth supportive of poverty eradication and development should be at the core of conflict-prevention strategies. In that context, the Council's policy guidance role for the work of funds and programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system is important (para. 12).	The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict has served to advance the Council's role in linking development work and post-conflict assistance. As for conflict prevention, the Council in its resolution 2003/1, on the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, acted to strengthen its ties with the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa by inviting the Chairperson of that Ad Hoc Working Group to the Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group. In recognition of the urgency of enhancing the United Nations system's response to the prevention and reduction of conflict in the country, the UNDP Bureau of Crisis Prevention

Relevant provisions	*Implementation/suggestions*
	and Recovery and its Regional Bureau for Africa undertook a mission to the country, which was coordinated with that of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group. The need for comprehensive approaches to conflict prevention and resolution and to building sustainable peace was recognized during the discussion of the General Assembly on strengthening the Organization. In his report on strengthening of the United Nations the Secretary-General noted (A/57/387 and Corr.1, para. 22) that the Security Council must turn to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council when required and these bodies, in turn, may have to adapt their own procedures and institutional practices in order to be able to discharge their responsibilities.

IV. Recommendations

6. Some significant progress has been made in the working methods of the Economic and Social Council over the past years, notably to increase efficiency and involve subsidiary bodies and other stakeholders in the Council's work. On the other hand, the Council would need to further develop modalities for integrated and effective consideration of the follow-up to the common agenda emerging from the major conferences, in the United Nations intergovernmental structure. In this regard, the following recommendations could be considered:

1. **Omnibus resolutions should be encouraged, especially on subjects which relate to the follow-up to a major United Nations conference or summit.**

2. **There is a need to continuously seek ways to ensure that the Council maximizes its supports to, and complements the work of, the General Assembly, and to avoid overlap in their work and meetings.**

3. **The Council may wish to consider ways of further enhancing its annual spring meetings with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO)as a global forum for advancing the commitments made in Monterrey,[2] and the meetings' contribution to the preparation of the General Assembly's high-level dialogue on the Monterrey follow-up.[3] It may wish to decide early on the substantive focus of its 2004 Spring meeting (under item 6 of its agenda) to enable timely preparations with the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO.**

4. **The Council may wish to invite non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to contribute to the work of the various segments of the Council. As recommended by the Bureau (non-paper from the President of the Council circulated to delegations on 5 March 2003), NGO forums should**

be held early on, organized and structured in a way that enables them to maximize their contributions to the work of the Council.

5. The Council may wish to examine its Bureau's suggestions regarding the modalities of the Council's work and to consider providing concrete guidance on how to put these suggestions into practice in preparing for its 2004 session.

6. The Council could reiterate its invitation to the Bureau to monitor timeliness of documentation.

7. The Council should continue to consider measures to build further the operational activities segment as a global forum to provide overall policy guidance to the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and to encourage to this end the full cooperation of the funds and programmes.

8. The Council should use fully its coordination, operational, humanitarian and general segments to mainstream implementation of conference goals in the system's work programmes and recommend new policies and measures to this end.

9. The Council could recommend that its Bureau, with the assistance of the secretariat, make further proposals at its organizational session for consolidating reports to be submitted at the general segment.

10. The Council may wish to further encourage the secretariat and its subsidiary bodies to ensure that meetings of subsidiary bodies are scheduled at least eight weeks before the Council's session so that their outcomes are fully reflected in the Council's work.

Notes

[1] See A/57/3 (Part II), chap. V, sect. A (preliminary version of text to be issued in *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/57/3/Rev.1)).

[2] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[3] Mandated by the General Assembly in resolution 57/272.

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Coordination, programme and other questions: international cooperation in the field of informatics

International cooperation in the field of informatics

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with the request made by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2002/35 of 26 July 2002 that the Secretary-General report on the initiatives taken by the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics.

The report reflects the various activities in the field of informatics reported by the departments of the Secretariat and includes the findings of the Working Group and an assessment of its work and mandate.

* E/2003/1.
** The document was submitted late to the conference services to obtain clearances outside the author department.

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I. Activities of the Technical Subgroup of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics

1. In its resolution 2002/35, the Economic and Social Council requested the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics to continue to carry out for another year, from within existing resources and with its mandate as stated in Council resolution 1995/61 of 28 July 1995, its work of facilitating the successful implementation of the initiatives being taken by the Secretary-General with regard to the use of information technology and of continuing the implementation of measures required to achieve its objectives.

2. The Working Group has the following global mission: (a) to sensitize nations to the gravity of the digital divide; (b) to help to determine the impact of information and communication technologies on the economic and social development of developing countries and on nations in transition from command to market-based economies; and (c) to analyse and emphasize solutions to meet global challenges created by the rapid growth of information and communication technologies.

3. *Training in information technology for delegations*. The first training programme for diplomats, focusing on computer and Internet know-how, including hardware, software, e-mail, web surfing and web design and maintenance, ended on 31 May 2002 and 20 students were given certificates. The second cycle started on 14 June 2002. Launched by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) under the auspices of the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics, the training programme, officially entitled the Policy and Training Programme for Ambassadors and Diplomats at the United Nations, consisted of a set of four progressive modules and one seminar, presented as a cycle that was repeated four times each year. The first four modules focused on technical know-how and were geared towards all diplomats. The fifth module, conducted in an interactive seminar covering policy awareness and security issues on information technology, was intended primarily for ambassadors and senior diplomats.

4. The fact that an application for training was oversubscribed confirmed the need for additional computer training for mission staff. The 100 participants who attended training were enthusiastic about the valuable knowledge gained.

5. *Working breakfast, held on 18 June 2002, for heads of delegations attending the General Assembly meeting devoted to information and communication technologies (in coordination with the Association for Information Technology)*. The Working Group coordinated with the Association for Information Technology to sponsor a breakfast meeting in June 2002 augmenting the first ever General Assembly meeting on Information and Communication Technologies for Development. The meeting was devoted to bridging the digital divide and to promoting digital opportunities in the emerging information society during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Participants addressed the digital divide in the context of globalization and the development process and collaborated to promote coherence and synergies between various regional and information and communication technologies initiatives. The meeting included participation of delegations from the States Members of the United Nations, the Secretariat, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia and the business sector.

6. Another working breakfast was held on 30 October 2002, which drew an estimated 250-person gathering of ambassadors, key mission personnel and United Nations staff members and select public and private sector executives, who discussed "best practices for implementing e-government strategies". Discussion topics included the current state of e-government globally, preparing for new or expanded e-government services, cutting-edge developments in e-government policy and practices and the social and policy implications of e-government solution.

7. Although no conclusions were drawn, speakers emphasized the need for intensification of and support for regional information and communication technologies initiatives in developing countries.

8. *Conference on Global Infosec 2002: Controlling and Assuring Security in Government and Enterprise Environments.* This conference took place on 5 and 6 September 2002 with intensive diplomatic and executive-level presentations and expert panels. Speakers detailed the latest developments in information and cyber security, network security and assurance and security applications for e-commerce and e-government.

9. The Working Group coordinated closely with AIT Global Inc. to support its efforts and make the conference a success. The over 800 attendees at this e-security conference represented a broad cross section of senior-level diplomatic staff, Secretariat officials, NGOs and public and private sector individuals. Ambassadors or heads of delegations and other diplomatic staff members represented over 120 missions and United Nations and Washington, D.C., embassies (in addition to individuals from 22 other nations). Private sector attendees came from 26 states of the United States, including California. There were 17 chief executive officers, 38 presidents, 7 chairpersons, 78 executive vice-presidents, senior vice-presidents and vice-presidents, 34 other chief officers, 85 directors, 53 managers and many other senior executives.

10. The conference emphasized that in the wake of the 11 September terrorist attacks, it is clear that we must protect and sustain e-commerce and e-government initiatives from disruptions owing to terrorist or security breaches.

11. *Global e-Commerce Summit: Secure E-commerce and E-government Operations in a Troubled World.* The Global e-Commerce Summit was held at Headquarters on 14 and 15 May 2003 and included a day and a half of intensive multinational corporate and national presentations, as well as expert panels. The meeting drew an estimated 750 ambassadors and key staff from United Nations missions and the Secretariat, Washington, D.C., embassies, private sector multinational corporations and the public sector. Key presentations and expert panels covered the latest software developments, hardware platforms, network applications, hackers, viruses, worms and terrorist disruptions that have a significant impact on e-commerce and e-government applications and initiatives. Presenters also spoke of the latest advances in e-commerce and e-government, information security and Internetworking for developing and developed nations.

12. *Presentation on distance learning.* Presentations were made on distance learning, commonly known as e-education or e-learning, at the meetings of the Working Group on Informatics. The technology that is driving distance learning today is based on the Internet and with Internet expansion and the use of the Internet growing around the world, it is easier to deliver electronic-based courses using the

World Wide Web and electronic mail and to use other mechanisms like databases to enhance the courses.

13. *Delegates' use of Personal Digital Assistant devices*. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Andorra proposed making a service available that would allow members of delegations, using palm-sized personal computers or Personal Digital Assistants, to download pertinent information from the un.org web site. Once that project was implemented, the Mission of Andorra would provide training for all permanent missions in New York.

14. Permanent missions responded very positively to the offer, especially those that had practical experience with similar software. A pilot implementation will take place in 2003, supported by Andorra.

15. *Mandate of the Working Group on Informatics*. The Working Group addressed the issue of its mandate and concluded that, it should continue and intensify its efforts among the private and public sectors and academia to promote the sharing of knowledge, particularly in support of the Millennium Development Goal of making available the benefits of new information and communication technologies to developing countries via conferences, meetings and other means.

16. Additionally, the Working Group concluded that, in its role as the representative group for Member States, regarding the use of information and communication technologies services provided by the Secretariat, it should continue to address:

(a) Connectivity between Member States and the Secretariat at Headquarters with the intent of enhancing those connections so as to enable the progressively broader participation of Member States in the network-accessible resources of the United Nations and, via the Headquarters connections to the Internet, in the network-accessible resources of the public and private sectors;

(b) E-mail services provided by the Secretariat to Member States to enable timely collaboration and document exchange among the permanent and observer missions, the Secretariat and the private and public sectors;

(c) Web-site hosting services provided by the Secretariat to Member States, enabling them to establish and maintain web sites that are accessible via the Internet;

(d) Broadening the availability of official documents via the Internet to include an ever-widening circle of access points from Member States and the public and private sectors;

(e) Providing access for Member States to specialized databases of interest to them and which are network-accessible United Nations resources or licensed commercial resources;

(f) Training provided by the Secretariat and others for Member States in the use of the above-mentioned services as well as the general use of information and communication technologies in furtherance of their work;

(g) Help Desk support provided by the Secretariat for Member States to resolve problems with the above-mentioned services;

(h) Identifying other information and communication technologies resources within the Secretariat of interest to Member States, such as videoconferencing, and arranging the terms of their use by Member States;

(i) Communicating the services and activities identified above to the staff of the permanent and observer missions and surveying the Member States to gain insight into the use of those resources and the support provided for them;

(j) Identifying new or changed information and communication technologies services that are appropriate for the use of Member States and that arise from the rapid evolution of information and communication technologies, such as facilitating the use of Personal Digital Assistant devices, laptops and wireless devices of all kinds in the conference areas.

II. Actions taken and activities engaged in by the Secretariat

17. *Activities of the Information Technology Services Division.* The Information Technology Services Division has continued to provide Help Desk services for all permanent and observer missions to handle the technical problems that are encountered in using the information technology services provided by the United Nations. In its effort to fulfil the mandate of providing connectivity to all permanent missions, the Division has cooperated with the Technical Subgroup of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics to stabilize and improve the Internet service offered. The following activities continue to be performed:

18. *Services to permanent missions*

(a) Currently, the UN.INT system hosts approximately 985 individual e-mail accounts. All permanent missions are now accessible through a uniform e-mail address system;

(b) The Information Technology Services Division installed a "spam filtering appliance" as an additional security measure to reduce the volume of "spamming" (unsolicited e-mail) and unauthorized access to e-mail accounts;

(c) There are now 155 web sites on the UN.INT server, which receives approximately 1.3 million visits each month. Each mission has the option of updating its web site using the access code provided;

(d) The Division continues to provide technical advice and secretariat support to the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics by attending its meetings and providing members with updates on new technology;

(e) A donation of 1,308 personal computers and printers, accrued from the Organization's personal computer replacement programme, was made to permanent missions;

(f) The Division continues to provide access to the United Nations Official Documents System (ODS). There are now 192 permanent missions with 1,283 users, from the missions themselves and from their capitals, using the ODS facility;

(g) Help Desk support continues to be provided to permanent missions from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. on United Nations workdays. There are four coordinators constantly on call who receive telephone calls, e-mail and voice mail, all of which

are logged in an automated tracking system. From June 2002 to May 2003, the mission Help Desk received 1,069 calls for technical support;

(h) The Division continues to maintain 24 computers installed in the Delegates' Lounge and first basement of the Secretariat Building, which were upgraded in September 2002 and have Windows 2000 and Internet Explorer installed. These computers have direct access to the Internet and are provided for the use of delegations only. The Division continues to ensure full availability by carrying out routine inspections of all devices.

19. *Treaty circulars*. In the interest of efficiency and manageability, the Information Technology Services Division has proposed enhancing the method of disseminating circular notifications by sending Member States' Internet links directly to the circular notifications in the online United Nations Treaty database. With the concurrence of the Working Group, a pilot has been undertaken to add these links to the current e-mail which will allow Member States to assess the impact of this proposed enhancement.

III. Activities of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

20. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management developed the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), which was assigned to promote the sharing of knowledge, experience and best practices throughout the world in sound public policies, effective public administration and efficient civil services, through capacity-building and cooperation among the States Members of the United Nations, with emphasis on South-South cooperation and the commitment of UNPAN to integrity and excellence. The highlights of the Division's activities included the following.

21. *E-Government*. The Division recently organized the International Conference on E-government for Development in Palermo, Italy, to discuss the challenges and opportunities of e-government. It prepared an open plan of action on e-government, which provides guidelines on the development and implementation of e-government strategies at the national level and captures best practices and lessons learned from experience to date.

22. It also conducted a global survey on the e-government activities of Member States, which is being expanded and will be conducted on a regular basis. Through its global UNPAN network, capacity-building activities on the application of information and communication technology in public administration has been achieved through sharing of best practices and through extensive training seminars conducted by the regional UNPAN nodes.

23. At the regional level, the Division worked with counterparts to develop regional e-government strategies and action plans for the Caribbean and Central America. A conference on e-government capacity-building in Africa took place in October 2002 and a related e-Africa initiative was launched shortly afterwards. Another programme focused on the application of information and communication technologies for the development of African parliaments. Activities within Asia

have focused on e-government at the local level through support to the City Informatization in the Asia-Pacific Region initiative.

24. At the national level, e-government pilot projects focusing on e-government strategies as well as practical applications were undertaken in five countries.

25. *Public policies on information and communication technologies and the knowledge society*. As background to the Economic and Social Council Committee of Experts on Public Administration, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management prepared a study on the capacity of the public sector to support the creation and application of knowledge, innovation and technology for development.

26. An Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Information and Communication Technologies and Public Policy convened in early 2003 to examine the role of the public sector in ensuring that the transition to the knowledge society is inclusive and promotes the development goals outlined in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

27. The Division also provided advisory services and technical cooperation on the Service and Policy Programme Development projects funded by the United Nations Development Programme, including those focused on national information and communication technologies strategies and knowledge/information policy.

28. The Division organized a number of training seminars relating to the utilization of UNPAN, designed to help countries concerned, especially developing countries and countries in economic transition, to seize the opportunity, respond to the challenge and forge ahead for their development.

IV. Activities of the Department of Public Information

29. *Webcasting*. The UN Website Section of the Department of Public Information provides Internet broadcasting coverage (United Nations webcast: <www.un.org/webcast>) of United Nations meetings, conferences, press briefings and events, as well as 24-hour-a-day webcasting of the UNTV channel. Internet users can watch webcasts of United Nations meetings and major events live or as archived videos from their homes or offices.

30. *Training*. The UN Website Section organized a six-day seminar for the development of web sites for the permanent missions of French-speaking African States, the fourth in the series entitled "The Internet as a tool for development". The seminar resulted in the creation of seven new web sites under <http://www.un.int/>. Furthermore, the Section will conduct, from 7 to 11 July 2003, a workshop on web-site creation for permanent missions of interested English-speaking States, as part of the training series on Policy and Training in Information Technology (PATIT) for ambassadors and diplomats at the United Nations, provided by UNITAR. The Section also organized a four-day condensed workshop on the basics of web-page design and development techniques, with special emphasis on the specification for creating web pages in Arabic, for Palestinian media practitioners.

31. *Cyberschoolbus*. Once a month, the United Nations Cyberschoolbus web site features a different ambassador to the United Nations in its new and very popular "Ask an Ambassador" programme. Through the students' questions and the

ambassador's answers, this feature provides opportunities for the permanent missions to present their countries and articulate their policies on a wide range of issues.

32. *Dag Hammarskjöld Library*. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library offers Secretariat and mission staff, members of delegations and accredited representatives of NGOs a broad range of training programmes involving various computer applications, which enable them to:

(a) Develop and enhance Internet skills (Cyberseek);

(b) More easily identify the wealth of information retrievable through United Nations web sites (United Nations Web Search);

(c) Overcome the complexities of working with documents through the use of both print and Internet resources (Basics of United Nations Documentation);

(d) Fully utilize the search and retrieval options available through ODS;

(e) Simplify identification of document symbols and sales numbers through exploration of UN-I-QUE, a database maintained by the Library;

(f) Effectively access information available in the Library's public catalogue, UNBISnet;

(g) Familiarize themselves with the electronic resources the Library makes available on the Intranet (Introduction to Dag Hammarskjöld Library Databases on the Intranet).

33. A total of 189 mission staff members were trained by the Users' Services Section of the Library last year.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

34. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics has been effective in coordinating high-level information exchange via conferences and working meetings among Member States, the Secretariat and the private and public sectors. It has also served as a bridge between Member States and the Secretariat in the areas of information and communication technology.

35. It is recommended that the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics continue with its mandate as stated in paragraphs 15 and 16.